

Public Affairs

OBJECTIVES, ORGANIZATION, AND POLICIES

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This instruction provides a concept of operations, assigns responsibilities, establishes minimum essential channels of communication, and prescribes policies and procedures for conducting public affairs activities in the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). It is applicable to all personnel assigned to USTRANSCOM and the Transportation Component Commands (TCCs). It implements Department of Defense (DOD) Directive (DODD) 5122.5, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD(PA)), and DODD 5400.13, Joint Public Affairs Operations. For the purpose of this instruction, the definition of public affairs is "Those media and community relations activities directed toward internal and external publics," and the definition of release of information is "Providing information to individuals of agencies outside the defense establishment by written, oral, or graphic means, including data or information provided in response to written or oral inquiries."

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

Overall, generally updates the text. Updates the references of CINC and DCINC to Commander and Deputy Commander. Adds responsibility of the content for the Public Web page. New or revised items are marked by an asterisk (*).

1. References and Supporting Information. References, related publications, and terms used in this instruction are listed in Attachment 1.

2. Policies and Procedures. The policy of DOD is to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress, and news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy, and answer requests for information from organizations and private citizens responsively and as rapidly as possible. In executing this policy, the following principles of information will apply:

2.1. Make information readily and fully available unless its release is precluded by national security constraints or valid statutory mandates or exceptions. Support the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in both letter and spirit.

2.2. Make a free flow of general and military information available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the armed forces and their families.

2.3. Do not classify information or otherwise withhold it merely to protect the government from criticism

or embarrassment.

2.4. Withhold information when disclosure would adversely affect national security, threaten the safety or privacy of U.S. government personnel or their families, violate the privacy of the citizens of the United States, or be contrary to law.

2.5. The DOD's obligation to provide the public with information on DOD major programs may require detailed public affairs planning and coordination within the DOD and with other government agencies. The sole purpose of such activity is to expedite the flow of information to the public; propaganda has no place in DOD public affairs programs.

3. Objectives.

***3.1.** To serve as advisor to the Commander USTRANSCOM and other USTRANSCOM senior officers on issues involving news media relations, public information, internal information, and content of the Public Web page.

***3.2.** To serve as sole spokesperson and release authority of information to the general public.

***3.3.** To achieve and maintain maximum understanding and support of USTRANSCOM's mission to provide air, land and sea transportation for the DOD in time of peace and war.

3.4. To provide the maximum amount of accurate information to the general public in a timely manner, consistent with national security and DOD principles of information.

3.5. To develop policies, plans and programs, and provide procedural public affairs guidance in support of DOD objectives and operations.

4. Policy.

4.1. Public affairs is a function of command at every level. The Commander USTRANSCOM retains overall responsibility for public affairs activities within USTRANSCOM, delegating responsibility to the Chief, Public Affairs.

4.2. The policy of the Command is to address public affairs matters using good judgment and common sense rather than a body of detailed rules and regulations. Therefore, principal reliance is placed on the initiative, ingenuity, imagination, experience and judgment of public affairs personnel at all levels. This instruction is intended to provide only a formula and framework within which all can work toward a common purpose while permitting the Commander USTRANSCOM to discharge responsibilities to higher authority. This instruction is specific with respect to authorities, command relationships, and channels of communication in the conduct of official business, but nothing is intended to inhibit originality or initiative, or restrict appropriate communications and consultations at all levels within the military and between military and civilian authorities.

4.3. USTRANSCOM, along with the TCCs, speak with one voice in matters of defense transportation, and in any given situation speak quickly with truth and purpose. To do so, communications on public affairs matters must be rapidly and fully coordinated with all parties concerned.

4.4. Inform the Commander USTRANSCOM by the most expeditious means of all significant potential or actual public affairs events and media reports of interest. When appropriate, coordinate with ASD(PA) and the military department concerned for releases. Significant incidents include, but are not limited to:

4.4.1. Ship collisions or groundings.

4.4.2. Aircraft incidents and/or crashes.

4.4.3. Fires, flooding, explosions, or other events involving significant material damage on board ships, railcars, motor vehicles, aircraft or facilities.

4.4.4. Bomb threats and/or acts of sabotage or terrorism threats/attacks.

4.4.5. Civil disturbances affecting TCCs' facilities.

4.4.6. Environmental disasters or accidents.

***4.4.7.** Deaths of TCC personnel related to an incident, accident, or combat.

4.5. USTRANSCOM has a responsibility to report to the public on the conduct of its business. Citizens have a right to know how efficiently and to what purpose the armed forces are using their personnel and money to achieve national security. The effectiveness of military operations in peacetime as well as war depends on public understanding and support.

5. Operating Guidelines. Public affairs activities in USTRANSCOM will reflect the following facts and considerations and will be carried out in accordance with the following guidelines:

***5.1.** USTRANSCOM is a global combatant command whose components have units located around the world, each acting on its own imperatives and each presenting a unique physical, political, and psychological environment to U.S. forces. Each presents unique public affairs requirements and opportunities.

5.2. Given the instant, worldwide capabilities of the media and the dynamics of international relations, it is necessary that:

5.2.1. Public affairs personnel in USTRANSCOM and its TCCs practice maximum cooperation to ensure efficient use of public affairs assets.

5.2.2. Public affairs personnel and resources are mobile and readily available for use when and where needed.

5.3. By definition, the public affairs officer is involved in command activities and operations, planned or in progress. The public affairs officer must use established access to the Commander USTRANSCOM to provide time-sensitive recommendations.

***5.4.** Security of information is a responsibility of the defense establishment by maintaining security at the source. Do not give reporters classified information. Additional guidance on security and policy review is found in paragraph 6.7.

6. Media Relations.

6.1. Treat all representatives of bona fide news organizations fairly, and give all reasonable assistance in obtaining information from USTRANSCOM.

6.2. Respond to news media queries rapidly and forthright, within policy and security restrictions. Answer routine queries as soon as possible and, at least, within a matter of hours. Make every effort to meet news media deadlines and, if the requested information is not readily available, inform the news media promptly.

6.3. Do not ignore media queries.

***6.4.** In the case of mishaps occurring in public areas, the appropriate TCC commander, or commander for that geographical location, has release authority, keeping the Commander USTRANSCOM and the USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office informed.

6.5. TCCs conduct day-to-day public affairs activities in accordance with governing Service regulations with the following expectations:

***6.5.1.** Refer media queries dealing with the DOD's overall strategic mobility capability to the USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office for coordination/response.

***6.5.2.** Take media queries regarding matters outside the responsibility of the command and refer promptly to the appropriate command, utilizing the most rapid and appropriate channels. Inform the USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office of any queries that fall into this area.

6.6. DOD activates the DOD Media Pool on a no-notice basis to cover exercises or real world contingencies. Prior to, or upon activation, USTRANSCOM may task TCCs to support the pool while it is in-transit. Due to the sensitive nature of the pool operation, taskings for support may be on a no-notice basis. TCC public affairs officers will make every effort to fulfill all taskings as rapidly and as courteously as possible. Do not issue a release about media pool activities unless otherwise directed by ASD(PA).

***6.7.** The USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office provides security and policy review of USTRANSCOM related speeches and other information concerning policies or programs of the DOD or the U.S. government. USTRANSCOM Instruction 35-2, Security and Policy Review Procedures, provides further guidance for clearance and release of such materials.

***6.8.** USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office will initiate contact with TCC public affairs officers prior to the Commander's visit to an area within that TCC's operational command. The Commander USTRANSCOM will routinely be available to talk with news media representatives but requests must be made in advance.

***6.8.1.** For scheduled media interviews, the TCC public affairs officer will provide the USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office, prior to the visit, a list of possible questions and proposed answers concerning local issues involving USTRANSCOM. Whenever possible, the TCC's public affairs officer will audio

tape the Commander USTRANSCOM's interviews and forward the tape to the USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office as soon as possible.

***6.8.2.** Wherever possible, TCCs and subordinate units will provide documentation photography of Commander USTRANSCOM visits and mail to: USTRANSCOM Public Affairs Office, 508 Scott Drive, Scott AFB IL 62225-5357.

***6.9.** Periodically review content of all Web pages of the Public Portal (<http://www.transcom.mil>) to ensure all information is correct. Contact responsible persons of the information for an update, and have them submit a Gatekeeper Request to the Webmaster. The USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office will be responsible for all information in the following tabs: Organization, Top Stories, People, Newcomer's Info and Photos & Facts.

7. Internal Information.

***7.1.** The USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office will conduct an internal information program. The program will encompass all those activities aimed at enhancing morale and generally increasing the effectiveness of individuals by keeping them informed about USTRANSCOM, their Service, their unit, their jobs, and other appropriate subjects.

***7.2.** Service Hometown News Center programs represent an effective means by which USTRANSCOM can communicate with a broad segment of the American public through the news media. The USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office conducts the Hometown News Release program for personnel in accordance with USTRANSCOMI 35-6, Hometown News Release Program.

8. Community Relations.

8.1. Positive, professional relations between command personnel and local civic leaders are essential to effective community relations. Foster relations officially through authorized participation in local civic programs, and unofficially by serving in Service organizations as private citizens. Participation in local community activities in accordance with DOD directives will be encouraged at all levels within USTRANSCOM.

8.2. Provide the community, the USTRANSCOM command display which graphically depicts USTRANSCOM's mission and the missions, equipment, and personnel of the TCCs. USTRANSCOM Instruction 35-7, Command Display Operations and Procedures, covers operation and utilization of the command display.

***8.3.** Speaking at public events is an effective means of informing the public, and developing public understanding and cooperation. USTRANSCOM will pursue an active public speakers' program in accordance with DOD directives. Public speaking requests must be approved by the USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office prior to acceptance.

***8.3.1.** The USTRANSCOM Public Affairs office writes speeches for the Commander and Deputy Commander, Chief of Staff and, as appropriate, other USTRANSCOM staff members.

8.4. Meet public requests for information, pamphlets, photographs, biographies, and other items about USTRANSCOM promptly. In most cases, public affairs personnel should assist individuals seeking information or materials not readily available. Direct requesters to established channels for obtaining certain materials (e.g. Government Printing Office, Web sites, etc.). If a request is refused, explain the reason fully and courteously. Process requests for information citing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) through FOIA channels. Use the following guidelines when responding to requests for information from private organizations and individuals other than news media.

8.4.1. Handle public inquiries rapidly and efficiently and with the same professionalism as media queries.

8.4.2. Handle routine requests from foreign citizens in the same manner as those from U.S. citizens, except for the following stipulations:

8.4.2.1. Refer those who request more detailed information, detailed photography, or a visit to an installation to the U.S. Information Service Office at the U.S. Embassy in their country.

8.4.2.2. Depending on the information requested, the reply may require review for security and policy conformance.

8.4.2.3. Report foreign information requests to USTRANSCOM Directorate of Intelligence (TCJ2) for review by foreign disclosure officials.

\\SIGNED\\
STEPHEN HONDA
Captain, U.S. Navy
Chief of Public Affairs

Attachment
Glossary of References and Terms

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND TERMS

References

DOD Directive 5122.5, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

DOD Directive 5122.8, Use of Military Carriers for Public Affairs Purposes

DOD Directive 5210.50, Unauthorized Disclosure of Classified Information to the Public

DOD Directive 5230.9, Clearance of DOD Information for Public Release

DOD Directive 5230.16, Nuclear Accident and Incident Public Affairs (PA) Guidance

DOD Directive 5400.7-R, Freedom of Information Act Program

DOD Directive 5400.13, Joint Public Affairs Operations

DOD Directive 5410.18, Community Relations

USTRANSCOM Instruction 35-2, Security and Policy Review Procedures

USTRANSCOM Instruction 35-6, USTRANSCOM Hometown News Release Program (PA)

USTRANSCOM Policy Directive 35-7, Operation and Utilization of USTRANSCOM Command Display

Joint Publication 3-61, Public Affairs

Terms

Public Affairs. Those media and community relations activities directed toward internal and external publics.

Release of information. Providing information to individuals or agencies outside the defense establishment by written, oral or graphic means, including data or information provided in response to written or oral inquiries.